

SUMMARY OF STAGE 1 ASSURANCE TOOLS, MECHANISMS AND PROCESSES

“Assurances” generally refers to the tools or mechanisms CALFED will employ to provide member agencies and stakeholders confidence that the CALFED Bay-Delta Program will be implemented as planned and agreed. For some stakeholders, assurances also means a level of protection from the possible adverse impacts of the CALFED Program.

Assurances can be “internal” to the Program or “external.” Many of the Stage 1 actions, when linked and integrated with other Stage 1 actions, provide internal assurances of implementation. Similarly, the concept of conditional decision making and “bundled actions” in themselves provide assurances that one element or component of the Program will not get ahead of the other.

In other cases, external assurances, such as legislation, regulations, or negotiated agreements or contracts among agencies and stakeholders will provide the needed level of certainty regarding Program implementation. In particular, an extension or expansion of the December 1994 Bay-Delta Accord may be an appropriate vehicle for provision of some of the needed assurances. Other tools or mechanisms which will be part of the Stage 1 Assurances package are the Conservation Strategy and the Contingency Response Plan.

Assurances must address broad, program-wide issues, as well as issues that are specific to an individual component or element. Some of the program-wide assurance issues are:

- Program oversight and agency/stakeholder involvement and coordination
- Protection of water rights, local groundwater resources and area of origin priorities
- Protection of environmental baseline conditions
- CVP and SWP operations criteria
- Financing and cost-sharing agreements
- Monitoring and research programs and adaptive management
- Programmatic permitting and approval processes

The Stage 1 Implementation Plan will address some of these issues internally, by an action or policy incorporated into the Program, or by the manner in which actions are linked, or by the way in which decisions are subject to a set of conditions or triggers. Other issues can be addressed by external assurance mechanisms such as an agreement among agencies and/or stakeholders (such as the role of stakeholder involvement in Program oversight), or by legislation (if new entities are to be created), or by revisions to regulations (such as the Water Quality Control Plan). In some cases, a process may be provided in Stage 1 to continue the development of the required assurances (for example, long-term operations criteria or financing arrangements).

Assurances which are more specifically related to program elements are summarized below with the probable tools or mechanisms shown in (...).

Water Transfer Policy

Water Transfer Information Clearinghouse (State Legislation)
Refinement/clarification of transfer rules (Policy decisions by CALFED agencies)
Linkage to water use efficiency and facilities (Integrated into Stage 1)

Water Use Efficiency

Financial assistance for technical support programs (Legislation?)
Certification process for water management plans (Stakeholder agreements)
Linkage to funding and facilities (Integrated into Stage 1)
Mandatory conservation plans if necessary (Legislation)

Levees and Channels

Funding for PL 84-99 standards (Legislation/Appropriations/User Fees)
Improvements to emergency response system (Agency decision; legislation)
Linkage to ERP (Integrated into Stage 1)
ESA application to levee maintenance (Conservation strategy; agreements)
Preservation of "common pool" (Integrated into preferred alternative)

Ecosystem Restoration Program

New entity for ERP management (Agreements; legislation)
Reliable funding outside of appropriations (Agency/stakeholder agreement)
Scientific review/peer review process (Program)
Objective performance measures (Agreements; program)
Linkage to levees and facilities (Program)
Scientific review/peer review (Strategic plan)

Water Quality

Appropriate mix of funding (Agreements; legislation/appropriations)
Preservation of "common pool" (Integrated into preferred alternative)

Watershed Management

Funding for local projects (Agreements; legislation/appropriations)
"Local control" of projects and programs (Agreements with local agencies)

Water Supply Reliability

ESA "regulatory stability" for agreed upon period of time (Conservation Strategy; Agency/Stakeholder agreements)
Planning and permitting process for new facilities (Agreements)
Linkage to long-term ERP funding (Integrated into Stage 1)
Operations criteria (Agreements; possible revisions to WQCP)
Water rights protection/area of origin protection (Agreements; possible legislation)
Local control of conjunctive use programs (Integrated into Program; legislation)
Linkage of new storage facilities to transfers and water use efficiency (Program)